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# THE SHEPHERD



# THE WAGGONER

and other poems by

Edmund Blunden

## JOHN CLARE

Poems chiefly from MSS.

selected and edited with

a biographical note by

Edmund Blunden

and

Alan Porter

# THE SHEPHERD

AND OTHER POEMS  
OF PEACE AND WAR

BY EDMUND <sup>Charles</sup>BLUNDEN



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## I I *th* R.S.R.

How bright a dove's wing shows against the sky  
When thunder's blackening up in monstrous cloud,  
How silver clear against war's hue and cry  
Each syllable of peace the gods allowed !  
Even common things in anguish have grown rare  
As legends of a richer life gone by,  
Like flowers that in their time are no one's care,  
But blooming late are loved and grudged to die.

What mercy is it, that I live and move,  
If haunted ever by war's agony ?  
Nature is love and will remember love,  
And kindly uses those whom fear set free ;  
Let me not even think of you as dead,  
O never dead ! you live, your old songs yet  
Pass me each day, your faith still routs my dread,  
Your past and future are my parapet.

You looked before and after ! these calm shires  
And doting sun and orchards all aflame,  
These joyful flocking swallows round the spires,  
Bonfires and turreted stacks—well may you claim,  
Still seeing these sweet familiar bygones, all !  
Still dwells in you their has-been, their to-be,  
And walking in their light you fear no fall.  
This is your holding : mine, across the sea,

Where much I find to trace old friendship by.  
' Here one bade us farewell,' ' Here supped we then,'  
' Wit never sweeter fell than that July '—  
Even sometimes comes the praise of better men.  
The land lies like a jewel in the mind,  
And featured sharp shall lie when other fades,  
And through its veins the eternal memories wind  
As that lost column down its colonnades.

Flat parcelled fields the scanty paths scored through,  
Woods where no guns thrust their lean muzzles out,  
Small smoky inns, we laughed at war's ado !  
And clutching death, to hear, fell into doubt.  
Christ at each crossroad hung, rich belfries tolling,  
Old folks a-digging, weathercocks turned torches,  
Half-hearted railways, flimsy millsails rolling—  
Not one, but by the host for ever marches.

## *Shepherd*

EVENING has brought the glow-worm to the green,  
And early stars to heaven, and joy to men ;  
The sun is gone, the shepherd leaves the pen  
And hobbles home, while we for leisure lean  
On garden pales. O shepherd old and kind,  
Sweet may your musings and your slumbers prove !—  
Where the rude chairs, of untanned osiers wove,  
Creak to the dead of night, his rest he'll find :



And at his feet well pleased his dog will doze,  
And not a traveller passes but he knows.

A country god to every childish eye—  
Who sees the shepherd save when he comes home,  
With untrimmed staff, smock stitched like honeycomb,  
With great-tongued boots, and buskins to the thigh ?  
A seer, a country god—so thought conceives  
His oracles of seasons foul or fair,  
His weather-bitten looks and wild white hair  
That on his shoulders thatches like an eaves :  
And he himself, proud of his antique toil,  
Gossips with none that might such honour soil.

Sleep comes upon the village, the rich bee  
From honeyed bells of balsams high is gone ;  
The windows palely shine ; the owls whoop on,  
But bats have slunk into their hollow tree.  
The shepherd hours before has closed his eyes,  
But he unseen will take his staff in hand  
And walk to wake the morning through the land  
Before the cockerel knows 'tis time to rise.  
High on the hill he dares the mist and dew  
And sings before a sunbeam ventures through.

Now when the morning ripens and unfolds  
Like beds of flowers the glories of the plain,  
His heart leaps up at every steeple vane  
And barn and kiln and windmill on the wolds ;  
For boyhood knew them all, and not a brook

But he has bathed and played the miller there ;  
By every green he's hurried to the fair  
And tended sheep in every whitethorn nook.  
Thus dreaming does he hurdle up the pen  
And thinks how soon comes clipping-time agen.

His sheep his children are, each one he knows,  
And well might know, who lay through winter storm  
In cramping hulks with bracken scarce kept warm  
While each one came from the poor frightened yoes.  
He never bids or wants for holiday,  
His sheep his children are and his delight :  
That shepherds'-harvest makes the May so bright  
When round his feet the lambs so frisk and play  
And nuzzle in his sleeve and twitch his hand—  
The prettiest dears, he calls them, in the land.

But May when music grows on every tree  
Too quickly passes, shepherd's-roses die—  
New dipt and shorn, they still delight the eye :  
How fast they gather to his " Cub-burree " !  
Even crows and jackdaws scrambling for the beans  
Among their troughs are of his rustic clan  
And know him king of bird and sheep and man ;  
And where he breaks his bread the emmet gleans.  
The great sun gives him wisdom, the wind sings  
Clear to his simple heart the hardest things.

The stubble browsing comes, and grand and grave  
Autumn in shadow swathes the rolling weald,  
The blue smoke curls with mocking stealth afield,

And far-off lights, like wild eyes in a cave,  
Stare at the shepherd on the bleaching grounds.  
Deeply he broods on the dark tide of change,  
And starts when echo sharp and sly and strange  
To his gap-stopping from the sear wood sounds.  
His very sheep-bells seem to bode him ill  
And starling whirlwinds strike his bosom chill.

Then whispering all his eighty years draw nigh,  
And mutter like an Advent wind, and grieve  
At perished summer, bid him take his leave  
Of toil and take some comfort ere he die.  
The hounded leaf has found a tongue to warn  
How fierce the fang of winter, the lead rain  
Brings him old pictures of the drowning plain,  
When even his dog sulks loath to face the morn.  
The sun drops cold in a watery cloud, the briars  
Like starved arms still snatch at his withered fires.

But shepherd goes to warm him in his chair,  
And in the blaze his dog growls at his dreams,  
And on the hearth the leaping firelight gleams  
That makes him think of one with ruddy hair  
Who kept the sheep in ancient Bethlehem.  
With trusting tears he takes his Bible, reads  
Once more of still green banks and glittering meads  
Where storms are not, nor ever floods to stem ;  
Where the kind shepherd never takes them wrong,  
And gently leads the yoes that are with young.

## *Forefathers*

HERE they went with smock and crook,  
Toiled in the sun, lolled in the shade,  
Here they mudded out the brook  
And here their hatchet cleared the glade :  
Harvest-supper woke their wit,  
Huntsman's moon their wooings lit.

From this church they led their brides,  
From this church themselves were led  
Shoulder-high ; on these waysides  
Sat to take their beer and bread.  
Names are gone—what men they were  
These their cottages declare.

Names are vanished, save the few  
In the old brown Bible scrawled ;  
These were men of pith and thew,  
Whom the city never called ;  
Scarce could read or hold a quill,  
Built the barn, the forge, the mill.

On the green they watched their sons  
Playing till too dark to see,  
As their fathers watched them once,  
As my father once watched me ;  
While the bat and beetle flew  
On the warm air webbed with dew.

Unrecorded, unrenowned,  
Men from whom my ways begin,  
Here I know you by your ground  
But I know you not within—  
All is mist, and there survives  
Not a moment of your lives.

Like the bee that now is blown  
Honey-heavy on my hand,  
From the toppling tansy-throne  
In the green tempestuous land,—  
I'm in clover now, nor know  
Who made honey long ago.

## *The Idlers*

THE gipsies lit their fires by the chalk-pit gate anew,  
And the hopped horses supped in the further dusk and  
dew ;  
The gnats flocked round the smoke like idlers as they  
were  
And through the goss and bushes the owls began to  
churr.

An ell above the woods the last of sunset glowed  
With a dusky gold that filled the pond beside the road ;  
The cricketers had done, the leas all silent lay,  
And the carrier's clattering wheels went past and died  
away.



The gipsies lolled and gossiped, and ate their stolen swedes,  
Made merry with mouth-organs, worked toys with  
piths of reeds :

The old wives puffed their pipes, nigh as black as their  
hair,

And not one of them all seemed to know the name of  
care.

## *The March Bee*

A WARNING wind comes to my resting-place  
And in a mountain cloud the lost sun chills ;  
Night comes ; and yet before she shows her face  
The sun flings off the shadows, warm light fills  
The valley and the clearings on the hills,  
Bleak crow the moorcocks on the fen's blue splashes,  
But here I warm myself with these bright looks and  
flashes.

And like to me the merry humble-bee  
Puts fear aside, runs forth to meet the sun,  
And by the ploughland's shoulder comes to see  
The flowers that like him best, and seems to shun  
Cold countless quaking windflowers every one,  
Primroses too ; but makes poor grass his choice  
Where small wood-strawberry blossoms nestle and rejoice.

The magpies steering round from wood to wood,  
Tree-creeper flickering up the elm's green rind,  
Bold gnats that revel round my solitude  
And most this pleasant bee intent to find  
The new-born joy, inveigle the rich mind

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Long after darkness comes cold-lipped to one  
Still hearkening to the bee, still basking in the sun.

## *Gleaning*

ALONG the baulk the grasses drenched in dews  
Soak through the morning gleaner's clumsy shoes,  
And cloying cobwebs trammel their brown cheeks  
While from the shouldering sun the dewfog reeks.  
Now soon begun, on ground where yesterday  
The rakers' warning-sheaf forbade their way,  
Hard clucking dames in great white hoods make haste  
To cram their lapbags with the barley waste,  
Scrambling as if a thousand were but one,  
Careless of stabbing thistles. Now the sun  
Gulps up the dew and dries the stubs, and scores  
Of tiny people trundle out of doors  
Among the stiff stalks, where the scratched hands ply  
Red ants and blackamoors and such as fly ;  
Tunbellied, too, with legs a finger long,  
The spider harvestman ; the churlish strong  
Black scorpion, prickled earwig, and that mite  
Who shuts up like a leaden shot in fright  
And lies for dead. And still before the rout  
The young rats and the fieldmice whisk about  
And from the trod whisp out the leveret darts,  
Bawled at by boys that pass with blundering carts  
Top-heavy to the red-tiled barns.—And still  
The children feed their corn sacks with good will,  
And farmwives ever faster stoop and flounce.

The hawk drops down a plummet's speed to pounce  
The nibbling mouse or resting lark away,  
The lost mole tries to pierce the matted clay  
In agony and terror of the sun.

The dinner hour and its grudged leisure won,  
All sit below the pollards on the dykes  
Rasped with the twinge of creeping barley spikes.  
Sweet beyond telling now the small beer goes  
From the hooped hardwood bottles, the wasp knows,  
And even hornets whizz from the eaten ash ;  
Then crusts are dropt and switches snatched to slash,  
While safe in shadow of the apron thrown  
Aside the bush which years before was grown  
To snap the poacher's nets, the baby sleeps.  
Now toil returns, in red-hot fluttering light  
And far afield the weary rabble creeps,  
Oft happening blind wheat, black among the white,  
That smutches where it touches quick as soot ;—  
Oft gaping where the landrail seems afoot,  
Who with such magic throws his baffling speech  
Far off he sounds when scarce beyond arm's reach.  
The dogs are left to mind the morning's gain,  
But squinting knaves can slouch to steal the grain.  
Close to the farm the fields are gleaned agen,  
Where the boy drives the turkey and white hen  
To pick the shelled sweet corn, their hue and cry  
Answers the gleaners' gabble ; and sows trudge by  
With little pigs to play and rootle there,  
And all the fields are full of din and blare.

So steals the time past, so they glean and gloat ;  
The hobby-horse whirs round, the moth's dust coat  
Blends with the stubble, scarlet soldiers fly  
In airy pleasure ; but the gleaners' eye  
Sees little but their spoils, or robin-flower  
Ever on tenterhooks to shun the shower,  
Their weather-prophet never known astray ;  
When he folds up, then towards the hedge glean they.  
But now the dragon of the skies droops, pales,  
And wandering in the wet grey western vales  
Stumbles, and passes, and the gleaning's done.  
The farmer with fat hares slung on his gun  
Gives folks goodnight, as down the ruts they pull  
The creaking two-wheeled handcarts bursting full,  
And whimpering children cease their teasing squawls  
While left alone the supping partridge calls—  
Till all at home is stacked from mischief's way,  
To thrash and dress the first wild windy day ;  
And each good wife crowns weariness with pride,  
With such small riches more than satisfied.

## *The Pasture Pond*

By the pasture pond alone  
I'll call the landscape all my own,  
Be the lord of all I see  
From water fly to topmost tree,  
And on these riches gloat this day  
Till the blue mist warns away.

Here's no malice that could wither  
Joy's blown flower, nor dare come hither ;  
No hot hurry such as drives  
Men through their unsolaced lives ;  
Here like bees I cannot fare  
A span but find some honey there.

The small birds and great as well  
In these trees and closes dwell,  
And there they never grudge nor brawl  
For nature gives enough for all ;  
Crows don't care what starling delves  
Among the mole-heaps like themselves.

You thrush that haunt the mellow ground  
And run with those quick glances round,  
You'll run and revel through my brain  
For a blue moon befooling pain,  
And elms so full of birds and song  
There shall be green the winter long.

From the meadows smooth and still,  
Where the peewits feed their fill  
And into swirling rings upfly  
With white breasts dazzling on the eye,  
To the pool itself I come  
And like rapture am struck dumb :

For if fields and air are free  
The water's double liberty,  
Where milch cows dewlap-deep may wade  
Or hernshaw ply his angling trade—  
Else what but vision dares intrude  
That many-peopled solitude ?

The astonished clouds seem lingering here  
For dragon-flies so whip and veer  
And take the sun and turn to flame,  
They'd make the fastest cloud seem lame,  
Or breaths of wind that sometimes fly  
And cut faint furrows and are by.

So well may I admire the pool  
Where thistles with their caps of wool  
(Whence those sly winds some flecks purloin)  
Stand sentinels at every coign,  
And sorrels rusty-red have banned  
Each place the thistles left unmanned.

But passing through, an old ally,  
Into the bright deeps I may spy,  
Where merry younkers, roach or rudd,  
Jump for the fly and flounce and scud ;  
That care for no one now, and live  
For every pleasure pools can give.

In russet weeds, by the sunken boat,  
That grudge each other room to float,



They hide along, grown fine and fat,  
I hear them like a lapping cat  
Feed from the stems till hunger's done—  
Then out agen to find the sun.

The moorhen, too, as proud as they,  
With jerking neck is making way  
In horse-shoe creeks where old pike rest  
And beetles skate in jostling jest ;  
And overhead as large as wrens  
Dance hobby-horses of the fens—

From all these happy folk I find  
Life's radiance kindle in my mind,  
And even when homeward last I turn  
How bright the hawthorn berries burn,  
How steady in the old elm still  
The great woodpecker strikes his bill ;

Whose labour oft in vain is given,  
Yet never he upbraids high heaven ;  
Such trust is his. O I have heard  
No sweeter from a singing bird  
Than his tap-tapping there this day,  
That said what words will never say.

The bells from humble steeples call,  
Nor will I be the last of all



To pass between the ringers strong  
And as of old make evensong ;  
While over pond and plat and hall  
The first of sleep begins to fall.

*Time, like an ever-rolling stream !*  
Through the yew the sun's last gleam  
Lights into a glory extreme  
The squirrel-carven pews that dream  
Of my fathers far beyond  
Their solitary pasture-pond.

## *November Morning*

FROM the night storm sad wakes the winter day  
With sobbings round the yew, and far-off surge  
Of broadcast rain ; the old house cries dismay,  
And rising floods gleam silver on the verge  
Of sackclothed skies and melancholy grounds.  
On the black hop-pole slats the weazen bine,  
The rooks with terror's tumult take their rounds,  
Under the eaves the chattering sparrows pine.

Waked by the bald light from his bed of straw,  
The beggar shudders out to steal and gnaw  
Sheeps' locusts : leaves the last of many homes—  
Where mouldered apples and black shoddy lie,  
Hop-shovels spluttered, wickered flasks flung by,  
And sharded pots and rusty curry combs.

## *The Dried Millpond*

OLD Broadbridge Pond, once on a time so deep,  
And full of water-lilies as could be,  
Is mudded now, in dull and deathly sleep ;  
A gaping slough, a piteous thing to see.

Hoarse brawling through some deep-wormed channels  
run

Small streams dull as dead serpents in the sun,  
Roots writhed and sloven mottle everywhere  
And even the mid pool has no secret lair,  
And what seemed dangers' very gateways lie  
Grey quagmire where the greedy moorhens ply.

Not even eels could bear to come agen.  
Poor roach and perch have perished, whose swift sides  
Made beautiful the bright green kingdom then,  
Nor any pleasure of the past abides.

## *Spring Night*

THROUGH the smothered air the wicker finds  
A muttering voice, " crick " cries the embered ash,  
Sharp rains knap at the panes beyond the blinds,  
The flues and eaves moan, the jarred windows clash ;  
And like a sea breaking its barriers, flooding  
New green abysses with untold uproar,

The cataract nightwind whelms the time of budding,  
Swooping in sightless fury off the moor  
Into our valley. Not a star shines. Who  
Would guess the martin and the cuckoo come,  
The pear in bloom, the bloom gone from the plum,  
The cowslips countless as a morning dew ?  
So mad it blows, so truceless and so grim,  
As if day's host of flowers were a moment's whim.

## *The May Day Garland*

THOUGH folks no more go Maying  
Upon the dancing-green  
With ale and cakes and music loud  
To crown the fairest queen,  
Yet little ones to each gate go  
Before the clock tells noon,  
And there the prettiest garlands show  
That e'er Love smiled upon.

Their garlands are of peagles  
That flaunt their yellow heads  
By dykesides where the pigeon broods  
And the nuzzling hedgehog beds—  
Their ladysmocks shall nod in the sun  
And kingcups scent like mead,  
And blue bell's misty flame be spun  
With daisies' glittering brede.

And one will make her garland  
A crown for such a day,  
And one a harp, and one a heart  
(Lest hers be stolen away) ;  
Cart-wheels never meant to turn  
And chip-hats never worn  
And petal-tambourines shall earn  
A largess this May morn.

And for these little children  
And my love like a child,  
The May should never fade to-night  
Could Time but be beguiled,  
Could Time but see the beauty of  
These singing honied hours,  
And lie in the sun adream while we  
Hid up his scythe in flowers !

## *Journey*

ALONG the relic of an ancient ride  
Where all the summer's weeds, an upstart race,  
The thoroughfare of centuries denied,  
We took our way, nor wished a better place.

There gilded flies and bees buzzed sweet content ;  
The path became a glade, a thousand ways  
About the hills and holes the brambles went,  
With first dewberries blue as thunder haze.

Red rosy flowers a thicket swarmed beyond  
Where long ago the faint brook's dropples died,  
And, not to drown us in their blossomed pond,  
Into the pasture's gap we turned aside.

Stern on their knolls the patriarch thistles stood,  
Nid-nodding in assembly passing wise,  
While often urchin winds in antic rude  
Plucked their white beards, puffed them to sink or rise

Like tufts stolen from the clouds whose concourse slow  
Darkened awhile or lightened travelling on,  
The darkest turning whiter than new snow  
As through the cliffs the sun a moment shone.

A nameless track, a rabble of outcast weeds,  
And knots of thistle-wool in clownish chase,  
What fare were these to furnish pleasure's needs ?  
We laughed at time, nor wished a better place.

## *High Summer*

Now all the birds are flown, the first, the second  
brood,  
Save those poor nestlings prisoned in cages for good ;  
The year seems to droop with its own midsummer might:  
Tarnishing mosses crowd even runnels out of sight.



The ponds so wasted down scarce give their tenants  
breath,  
Who plunge their heads to the ooze, and sicken to their  
death  
Unless the clouds come on—already their dead float  
Gleamless among the brambles that hide the moorhen's  
boat.

Slow walks the farmer's cob with ever-switching tail  
Where the white dust-track glares ; and labour dips  
his pail  
But slow where the sand-vein still bubbles its clear  
spring ;  
The mat-mender squatting near wearilybraids his string,

And curses at the thunder-flies that blacken on his arm  
(As now they irk and terrify the gangers on the farm) ;  
And thinks once again when he charged across the sand  
In such torment, his reward—a hook for a hand ;

And yet he labours on, till one o'clock drones,  
Muttering how the flies make the flesh creep on his  
bones—  
Then hobbles for his beer, and lively by and bye  
Talks forgotten battles with a tear in his eye.



## *Evening Mystery*

Now ragged clouds in the west are heaping,  
All the hedges fall a-weeping,  
    And in a thin green distance flowers  
    The moon, the blossom of lonely hours.

The moon she lightens on a myriad meadows  
And her rays wander among wood shadows ;  
    Ere the last of sunset's flown  
    She has made a new world of her own.

Old farm-houses with their white faces  
Fly, and their ghosts have taken their places ;  
    Even the signposts like grim liars  
    Point to losing brakes and briars.

Tired birds roosting are not yet sleeping,  
But stir and mutter at the wild eyes peeping ;  
    And sheep will not let silence lie,  
    But blare about the hilltop sky

As though long-plotting dogs had broken  
From kennel-chains, by the ringleader spoken,  
    To harry the ewes in the light of the moon—  
    The blood on their jaws will hang 'em anon.

But no, for miles the sheepfolds moan,  
And dogs bay from their farms alone ;  
Can she who shines so calm be fear ?  
What poison pours she in slumber's ear ?

## *Sheet Lightning*

WHEN on the green the rag-tag game had stopt  
And red the lights through alehouse curtains glowed,  
The clambering brake drove out and took the road.  
Then on the stern moors all the babble dropt  
Among those merry men, who felt the dew  
Sweet to the soul and saw the southern blue  
Thronged with heat lightning miles and miles abroad,  
Working and whickering, snakish, winged and clawed,  
Or like old carp lazily rising and shouldering  
Long the slate cloud flank shook with the death-white  
    smouldering :  
Yet not a voice.

    The night drooped oven-hot ;  
Then where the turnpike pierced the black wood plot,  
Tongues wagged again and each man felt the grim  
Destiny of the hour speaking through him,  
And then tales came of dwarfs on Starling Hill  
And those young swimmers drowned at the roller Mill,  
Where on the drowsiest noon the undertow  
Famishing for life boiled like a pot below :

And how two higglers at the Walnut Tree  
Had curst the Lord in thunderstorm and He  
Had struck them dead as soot with lightning then—  
It left the tankards whole, it chose the men.  
Many a lad and many a lass was named  
Who once stept bold and proud ; but death had  
tamed

Their revel on the eve of May ; cut short  
The primrosing and promise of good sport,  
Shut up the score book, laid the ribbands bye.

Such bodings mustered from the fevered sky ;  
But now the spring well through the honeycomb  
Of scored stone rumbling tokened them near home,  
The whip lash clacked, the jog-trot sharpened, all  
Sang Farmer's Boy as loud as they could bawl,  
And at the Walnut Tree the homeward brake  
Stopt for hoarse ribaldry to brag and slake.

The weary wildfire faded from the dark ;  
While this one damned the parson, that the clerk ;  
And anger's balefire forked from the unbared blade  
At word of things gone wrong or stakes not paid :

While Joe the driver stooped with oath to find  
A young jack rabbit in the roadway, blind  
Or dazzled by the lamps, as stiff as steel  
With fear. Joe beat its brain out on the wheel.

## *Will o' the Wisp*

FROM choked morass I leap and run  
As free as heaven's stars or sun  
And when the fisher gets him home  
About his lair I nimbly roam,  
Unthreatened by his envious eye  
That wishes water folk to die,  
And then like darting dace I go  
Soaring, swerving high and low.

The wind though scarce a ghostly stir  
Bears my small torch that men aver  
Is but a vapour's fevered sheen  
Or lanterned fly like him in green  
Whose light now glistens on the road  
As mewling cat-owls wheel abroad ;  
But those who've seen me, make reply  
' Nor marish-breath nor lanterned fly.'

And this my revel I will make  
Though churls and fools rush in my wake  
And like a thistle's down would seize  
A God that takes his evening ease !  
So Hodge and Ha'pence lured askance  
See me past further sagbeds dance  
And squashing where the black streams crawl  
Are left with working mire to brawl.

On ashy clouds if I've a mind  
I hover over human kind  
And loose my summer lightnings till  
The very drunkard's tongue is still ;  
I, with the bright-haired comets kin,  
Baited for a harlequin,  
I, spirit fire that none can quell,  
Content in swamps despised to dwell !

## *Cloudy June*

ABOVE the hedge the spearman thistle towers  
And thinks himself the god of all he sees ;  
But nettles jostle fearless where he glowers,  
Like old and stained and sullen tapestries ;  
And elbowing hemlocks almost turn to trees,  
Proud as the sweetbriar with her bubble flowers,  
Where puft green spider cowers  
To trap the toiling bees.

Here joy shall muse what melancholy tells,  
And melancholy smile because of joy,  
Whether the poppy breathe arabian spells  
To make them friends, or whistling gipsy-boy  
Sound them a truce that nothing comes to cloy.  
No sunray burns through this slow cloud, nor swells  
Noise save the browsing-bells,  
Half sorrow and half joy.



Night comes ; from fens where blind grey castles frown  
A veiled moon ventures on the cavernous sky.  
No stir, no tassel-tremble on the down :  
Mood dims to nothing : atom-like I lie  
Where nightjars burr and yapping fox steps by  
And hedgehogs wheeze and play in glimmering brown ;  
And my swooned passions drown,  
Nor tell me I am I.

## *Mole Catcher*

WITH coat like any mole's, as soft and black,  
And hazel bows bundled beneath his arm,  
And long-helved spade and rush bag on his back  
The trapper plods alone about the farm  
And spies new mounds in the ripe pasture-land,  
And where the lob-worms writhe up in alarm  
And easy sinks the spade, he takes his stand  
Knowing the moles' dark highroad runs below :  
Then sharp and square he chops the turf, and day  
Gloats on the opened turnpike through the clay.

Out from his wallet hurry pin and prong,  
And trap, and noose to tie it to the bow ;  
And then his grand arcanum, oily and strong,  
Found out by his forefather years ago  
To scent the peg and witch the moles along.  
The bow is earthed and arched ready to shoot



And snatch the death-knot fast round the first mole  
Who comes and snuffs well pleased and tries to root  
Past the sly nose peg ; back again is put  
The mould, and death left smirking in the hole.  
The old man goes and tallies all his snares  
And finds the prisoners there and takes his toll.

And moles to him are only moles ; but hares  
See him afield and scarcely cease to nip  
Their dinners, for he harms not them ; he spares  
The drowning fly that of his ale would sip  
And throws the ant the crumbs of comradeship.  
And every time he comes into his yard  
Grey linnet knows he brings the groundsel sheaf  
And clatters round the cage to be unbarred  
And on his finger whistles twice as hard.—  
What his old vicar says, is his belief,  
In the side pew he sits and hears the truth  
And never misses once to ring his bell  
On Sundays night and morn, nor once since youth  
Has heard the chimes afield, but has heard tell  
There's not a peal in England sounds so well.

## *Water Sport*

' COME, all who hear our song ' say Yalding bells,  
And dim ' We bid you come ' ring Hunton's four ;  
Then, ' Come, come, come,' the dingling treble tells,  
And still the echo drones a moment more.  
The sunny music travelling out like bees  
Was pleasant on the water's wide blue glade,  
Where Cheveney mill peers through the poplar trees—  
Sweet fell the summons there, but none obeyed.

Loosed from the harness of the grumbling mill  
Hungry for play, peal churchbells as they will,  
The mill boy and his boon companions urge  
Their crazy boat out from the bubbling verge  
And up the broad flood, gabbling as they row,  
They venture proud as Vikings long ago ;  
Where the red butterfly with sleights and whims  
Mocks the stretched hand, and where the swallow  
    skims  
To gild his wing with floss of twinkling dew.  
And in the hawthorn whence the young thrush flew  
The chuff vole feeds, a very alderman,  
Though, scared below, that old leviathan  
The pike shoots into surer solitude.

Pleasure is there in that old boat and rude,  
And will be there, as long as the green planks  
Hold each to each : as long as Sunday pranks  
Startle the redhead moorhen into shelter

Or on the sleeping hatch the black weeds swelter.  
Glorious will be the long adventurous day,  
And sweet will vespers be, to hush their play,  
When the slow ripples from the home course run  
For seeming miles on miles to the dying Sun,  
The dying Sun that even through the black  
Sharp-jutting mill will burn with intense light ;  
Joy will fall deeper with the dews of night  
And the new moon marred with no wraith or  
    wrack  
Shine like an angel to the mill boy's sight.

## *The Scythe Struck by Lightning*

A THICK hot haze had choked the valley grounds  
Long since, the dogday sun had gone his rounds  
Like a dull coal half lit with sulky heat ;  
And leas were iron, ponds were clay, fierce beat  
The blackening flies round moody cattle's eyes.  
Wasps on the mudbanks seemed a hornet's size  
That on the dead roach battened. The plough's increase  
Stood under a curse.

Behold, the far release !  
Old wisdom breathless at her cottage door  
' Sounds of abundance ' mused, and heard the roar  
Of marshalled armies in the silent air,  
And thought Elisha stood beside her there,

And clacking reckoned ere the next nightfall  
She'd turn the looking-glasses to the wall.

Faster than armies out of the burnt void  
The hourglass clouds innumerably deployed,  
And when the hay-folks next look up, the sky  
Sags black above them ; scarce is time to fly.  
And most run for their cottages ; but Ward,  
The mower for the inn beside the ford,  
And slow strides he with shouldered scythe still bare,  
While to the coverts leaps the great-eyed hare.

As he came in the dust snatched up and whirled  
Hung high, and like a bell-rope whipped and twirled ;  
The brazen light glared round, the haze resolved  
Into demoniac shapes bulged and convolved.  
Well might poor ewes afar make bleatings wild,  
Though this old trusting mower sat and smiled,  
For from the hush of many days the land  
Had waked itself : and now on every hand  
Shrill swift alarm-notes, cries and counter-cries,  
Lowings and crowings came and throbbing sighs.  
Now atom lightning brandished on the moor,  
Then out of sullen drumming came the roar  
Of thunder joining battle east and west :  
In hedge and orchard small birds durst not rest,  
Fluttering like dead leaves and like wisps of straws,  
And the cuckoo called again, for without pause  
Oncoming voices in the vortex burred.  
The storm came toppling like a wave, and blurred  
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In grey the trees that like black steeples towered.  
The sun's last yellow died. Then who but cowered ?  
Down ruddying darkness floods the hideous flash,  
And pole to pole the cataract whirlwinds clash.

Alone within the tavern parlour still  
Sat the grey mower, pondering his God's will,  
And flinching not to flame or bolt, that swooped  
With a great hissing rain till terror drooped  
In weariness : and then there came a roar  
Ten-thousand-fold, he saw not, was no more—  
But life bursts on him once again, and blood  
Beats droning round, and light comes in a flood.

He stares and sees the sashes battered awry,  
The wainscot shivered, the crocks shattered, and nigh,  
His twisted scythe, melted by its fierce foe,  
Whose Parthian shot struck down the chimney. Slow  
Old Ward lays hand to his old working-friend,  
And thanking God Whose mercy did defend  
His servant, yet must drop a tear or two  
And think of times when that old scythe was new,  
And stands in silent grief, nor hears the voices  
Of many a bird that through the land rejoices,  
Nor sees through the smashed panes the seagreen sky,  
That ripens into blue, nor knows the storm is by.

# *The Giant Puffball*

FROM what star I know not, but I found  
Myself newborn below the coppice rail,  
No bigger than the dewdrops and as round,  
In a soft sward, no cattle might assail.

And so I gathered mightiness and grew  
With this one dream kindling in me, that I  
Should never cease from conquering light and dew  
Till my white splendour touched the trembling sky.

A century of blue and stilly light  
Bowed down before me, the dew came agen,  
The moon my sibyl worshipped through the night,  
The sun returned and long abode : but then

Hoarse drooping darkness hung me with a shroud  
And switched at me with shrivelled leaves in scorn.  
Red morning stole beneath a grinning cloud,  
And suddenly clambering over dike and thorn

A half-moon host of churls with flags and sticks  
Hallooed and hurtled up the partridge brood,  
And Death clapped hands from all the echoing thicks,  
And trampling envy spied me where I stood ;



Who haled me tired and quaking, hid me by,  
And came agen after an age of cold,  
And hung me in the prison-house adry  
From the great crossbeam. Here defiled and old

I perish through unnumbered hours, I swoon,  
Hacked with harsh knives to staunch a child's torn  
hand ;  
And all my hopes must with my body soon  
Be but as crouching dust and wind-blown sand.

## *First Snow*

By the red chimney-pots the pigeons cower,  
With heads tucked in, to find what warmth they may ;  
Swift the white motes are come in a glistening shower,  
And the blue brightness that unsealed the day  
Is lost in wreathing grey.

Half hoping, and half doubting, small birds come  
And whistle on the taloned boughs ; where still  
Pale apples swing, like masks that in old Rome  
The gardeners hung to warn each pilfering bill :  
But here worse gods shall kill.

The shower convolves and drives : all the trees' arms  
Are whitened over till small birds well know  
What fate has bidden. Faint from lonely farms  
Guns speak like echoes of the croaking crow.  
How silent comes the snow.

Now what shall warm the frost-burnt grape that clings  
To the green sapless vine ? Poor budding rose  
And lavender's late blossom, get you wings  
To flee the death that in the winnow goes.  
Mute the cloaked village grows ;

Not a bird pipes ; nor cockerel calls the tune,  
Who underneath the ivied paling passes  
With all his hens. The church clock drones the noon ;  
In the brown gaping grave the snow amasses,  
The thin wind shakes the grasses.

To-day they bear the priest unto his rest  
Among his own, where he so long had willed.  
There he shall lie, time's winter in his breast,  
There the harsh tongue of malice shall be stilled,  
There toil's reward fulfilled.

If only through the snow and stomped mould he  
Might hear the bells or horses' brasses ring,  
The lads at football still, the children's glee  
At slide ; the rooks, the baaing lambs in spring,  
Even his enemies sing !

## *Village Green*

THE thatched roofs green with moss and grass stand  
round,  
And earthly walls seem growing from the ground,  
Bold pipe the missel-bird and bluecap gay  
From white-bloomed plum, nor fear the yokels' play ;  
Who on the wet green whirl the ball about  
With monstrous shambling kicks ; and in and out  
Among them plays the mongrel black and young  
As pleased as any there, and lolls his tongue.  
But near the postman watching ' how she flies '  
The older dog looks on with pitying eyes,  
And thinks it only folly play, and droops  
His weary head away when laughter whoops  
To see tripped longshanks floundering on his back  
With trousers daubed in mire and face all black.

## *The Poor Man's Pig*

ALREADY fallen plum-bloom stars the green  
And apple-boughs as knarred as old toads' backs  
Wear their small roses ere a rose is seen ;  
The building thrush watches old Job who stacks  
The bright-peeled osiers on the sunny fence,  
The pent sow grunts to hear him stumping by,  
And tries to push the bolt and scamper thence,  
But her ringed snout still keeps her to the sty.

Then out he lets her run ; away she snorts  
In bundling gallop for the cottage door,  
With hungry hubbub begging crusts and orts,  
Then like the whirlwind bumping round once more ;  
Nuzzling the dog, making the pullets run,  
And sulky as a child when her play's done.

## *The Covert*

I ALWAYS thought to find my love  
In some grove's ancient lair  
Where though all day my steps might rove  
No one beside would fare :

Among the small forgotten woods  
With clambering ivy laden,  
By ridings lost in bramble hoods  
I haunted for my maiden.

The greenest places I could find,  
Where underwoods are free  
To flourish like the taller kind,  
Seemed homes where she might be.

And nothing but the loitering brook  
Or bee with question rude  
Notice of my intrusion took  
Or felt my solitude.

The brook's eye mirrored me and seemed  
With my own thoughts to shine,  
The bee patrolling where I dreamed  
Grumbled for countersign.

‘ And are not maidens fair to see  
In every green and town ?  
Why go you wooing secretly  
Through paths none travel down ?

Why stare you on the sunny grove  
Like pale ghosts on moonlight ?  
But madness there will find a love  
And then be shut from sight.’

Daphne from Phœbus fled of old  
And grew into a tree,  
And all the loves of heaven, I hold,  
On earth now prisoned be.

And it may be, from earth or air,  
My longing shall unsphere  
Beauty that only Daphnes wear,  
And so I tarry here—

Is there no spell upon this gloom  
So radiant, cool and green,  
As promises the sudden bloom  
Of the loveliest ever seen ?



I know not how or when the One  
Shall come—long have I gazed—  
But shining like the vital sun  
Till even the wood's amazed,

The flower of cool and flower of bright  
And flower of woman too,  
In the green dusk a dazzling light  
Yet sweet as manna-dew :

Gliding into seen Form, where she  
A locked-up secret lay,  
From tingling air, from sighing tree—  
This Love shall crown my day.

—Thus murmured to himself the boy  
Where all the spinneys ring  
With as rich syllables of joy  
As ever hailed the spring.

## *The South-west Wind*

WE stood by the idle weir,  
Like bells the waters played,  
In moonlight sleeping through the shire,  
As it would never fade :  
So slept our shining peace of mind  
Till rose a south-west wind.



How sorrow comes who knows ?  
And here joy surely had been :  
But joy like any wild wind blows  
From mountains none has seen,  
And still its cloudy veilings throws  
On the bright road it goes.

The black-plumed poplars swung  
So softly across the sky ;  
The ivy sighed, the river sung,  
Woolpacks were wafting high.  
The moon her golden tinges flung  
On these she straight was lost among.

O south-west wind of the soul,  
That brought such new delight,  
And passing by in music stole  
Love's rich and trusting light,  
Would that we thrilled to thy least breath,  
Now all is still as death.

## *The Watermill*

I'LL rise at midnight and I'll rove  
Up the hill and down the drove  
That leads to the old unnoticed mill,  
And think of one I used to love :

There stooping to the hunching wall  
I'll stare into the rush of stars  
Or bubbles that the waterfall  
Brings forth and breaks in ceaseless wars.

The shelving hills have made a fourm  
Where the mill holdings shelter warm,  
And here I came with one I loved  
To watch the seething millions swarm.  
But long ago she grew a ghost  
Though walking with me every day ;  
Even when her beauty burned me most  
She to a spectre dimmed away—

Until though cheeks all morning-bright  
And black eyes gleaming life's delight  
And singing voice dwelt in my sense,  
Herself paled on my inward sight.  
She grew one whom deep waters glassed.  
Then in dismay I hid from her,  
And lone by talking brooks at last  
I found a Love still lovelier.

O lost in tortured days of France !  
Yet still the moment comes like chance  
Born in the stirring midnight's sigh  
Or in the wild wet sunset's glance :  
And how I know not but this stream  
Still sounds like vision's voice, and still  
I watch with Love the bubbles gleam,  
I walk with Love beside the mill.

The heavens are thrall'd with cloud, yet grey,  
Half-moonlight swims the field till day,  
    The stubbled fields, the bleaching woods ;—  
Even this bleak hour was stolen away.  
By this shy water falling low  
    And calling low the whole night through  
And calling back the long ago  
    And richest world I ever knew.

The hop-kiln fingers cobweb-white  
With discord dim turned left and right,  
    And when the wind was south and small  
The sea's far whisper drowsed the night ;  
Scarce more than mantling ivy's voice  
    That in the tumbling water trailed.  
Love's spirit called me to rejoice  
    When she to nothingness had paled :

For Love the daffodils shone here  
In grass the greenest of the year,  
    Daffodils seemed the sunset lights  
And silver birches budded clear :  
And all from east to west there strode  
    Great shafted clouds in argent air,  
The shining chariot-wheels of God,  
    And still Love's moment sees them there.

## *The Forest*

AMONG the golden groves when June walketh there  
I go to find old loves in the haunted air,  
And with the humble bee down the ancient rides  
I pause whene'er I see where my honey hides.

But scarcely do I heed the small welcome moss  
Or time's secrets read or pore on pit and fosse,  
Or kindle at blooms I knew not before,  
Though twayblade haunt the glooms and strange  
    hellebore.

The pheasant crows anear, I lift not my head ;  
Wildcats race in fear—as well flee the dead !  
Oaks breathe and pines sigh, and all for praise,  
And yet my soul divines little that each says :

But the whole wood moves again and again  
Memory of old loves, perfect joy of pain ;  
Without words I've found the hid world at last  
In the woods deeps drowned, after so long past :

Not my first delight, the sweet Kentish girl,  
Once ever in my sight, but O ! gone in the whirl  
Of time's broken stream, till I cannot guess  
Her smile or primrose gleam of new loveliness :

Not my childhood's bliss, in greenwoods to go  
Where great snakes might hiss, so high reeds did grow,  
And from early day till eve trembling crept,  
Pioneers to stray where the black ponds slept :

But the rich hours chance gave, where droughthy with  
war

I left him to rave on his ridges not far,  
And lay in a green shade of Aveluy Wood  
And with those hours allayed the fever in the blood ;

Not a leaf regarding, but one with the wood's soul,  
All my thoughts discarding—refreshed thence and  
whole

I went to live or die, and five years are flown,  
But not till now was I with the woods again alone.

## *Behind The Line*

TREASURE not so the forlorn days  
When dun clouds flooded the naked plains  
With foul remorseless rains ;  
Tread not those memory ways  
Where by the dripping alien farms,  
Starved orchards with their shrivelled arms,  
The bitter mouldering wind would whine  
At the brisk mules clattering towards the Line.



Remember not with so sharp skill  
Each chasm in the clouds that with strange fire  
    Lit pyramid-fosse and spire  
    Miles on miles from our hill ;  
In the magic glass, aye, then their lure  
Like heaven's houses gleaming pure  
Might soothe the long-imprisoned sight  
And put the seething storm to flight.

Enact not you so like a wheel  
The round of evenings in sandbagged rooms  
    Where candles flicked the glooms ;  
    The jests old time could steal  
From ugly destiny, on whose brink  
The poor fools grappled fear with drink,  
And snubbed the hungry raving guns  
With endless tunes on gramophones.

About you spreads the world anew,  
The old fields all for your sense rejoice,  
    Music has found her ancient voice,  
    From the hills there's heaven on earth to view ;  
And kindly Mirth will raise his glass  
To bid you with dull Care go pass—  
And still you wander muttering on  
Over the shades of shadows gone.

## *The Avenue*

UP the long colonnade I press, and strive  
By love to thank God that I go alive :  
And the night dark as palls of cloud can prove  
Bids me seek beauty, while wetshod I move,  
In the scarce-glimmering boles and flying boughs  
That run up black and naked to Heaven's brows  
And are as still as life could ever be.

Thus think I trudging on to know each tree,  
This leaning out of line ; that with great rings,  
Aye, ruffs of gnarled grain, whence the forked top  
springs ;  
That with its crow's nest ; one whose boughs stoop  
down  
Like roots into the sward below ; one's crown  
Struck by the lightning, whence it stands alone  
Stark staring mad but dead, its own tombstone.

And still trees, trees ; long lies the journey through,  
Till the thought runs like rebel dogs askew,  
And soon one tree is like the rest a tree,  
If stunt or sturdy, all are one to me.  
While men ahead, behind and left and right,  
Tramp over the greasy cobbles through midnight,  
Between great monolith trees, and often throw  
Their strapped packs up to ease them, as they go  
Half in a sleep, brain-cramped, dead though they live ;  
And those who speak find but few words to give.

Drenchingly dripped the trees, the blown sleet came.  
These trees were jagged with worse than lightning's  
    flame,  
These fields were gouged with worse than ploughs, a  
    moan  
Worse than the winds with every wind went on.  
The rattling limbers hurrying past would jar  
The jangled nerves, and candles' chancing gleam  
From sweating cellars looked sweet peace as far  
As any star and wilder than a dream,  
To him who soon would be beyond the wire  
Listening his wits to ague in the mire,  
And waiting till the drumfire hours began,  
In the fool's triumph of the soul of man :  
Beneath those lights whose fountain-play would shine  
On quiet hamlets miles behind the line,  
That in our respite we had watched ascend,  
And poise their drooped heads scouring end to end  
The grey front lines ; and plucking at death's sleeve  
They showed him in the nick new skulls to cleave,  
Yet never once lit up our destiny,  
But moped and mowed in dizzy secrecy.

Now on the sky I see the dull lights burn  
Of that small village whither I return.  
The trees hide backward in the mists, the men  
Are lying in their thankless graves agen,  
And I a stranger in my home pass by  
To seek and serve the beauty that must die.

## *Reunion in War*

THE windmill in his smock of white  
    Stared from his little crest,  
Like a slow smoke was the moonlight  
    As I went like one possessed

Where the glebe path makes shortest way ;  
    The stammering wicket swung.  
I passed amid the crosses grey  
    Where opiate yew-boughs hung.

The bleached grass shuddered into sighs,  
    The dogs that knew this moon  
Far up were harrying sheep, the cries  
    Of hunting owls went on.

And I among the dead made haste  
    And over flat vault stones  
Set in the path unheeding paced  
    Nor thought of those chill bones.

Thus to my sweetheart's cottage I,  
    Who long had been away,  
Turned as the traveller turns adry  
    To brooks to moist his clay.

Her cottage stood like a dream, so clear  
And yet so dark ; and now  
I thought to find my more than dear  
And if she'd kept her vow.

Old house dog from his barrel came  
Without a voice, and knew  
And licked my hand ; all seemed the same  
To the moonlight and the dew.

By the white damson then I took  
The tallest osier wand  
And thrice upon her casement strook,  
And she, so fair, so fond,

Looked out, and saw in wild delight  
And tiptoed down to me,  
And cried in silent joy that night  
Beside the bullace tree.

O cruel time to take away,  
And worse to bring agen;  
Why slept not I in Flanders clay  
With all the murdered men ?

For I had changed, or she had changed,  
Though true loves both had been,  
Even while we kissed we stood estranged  
With the ghosts of war between.



We had not met but a moment ere  
War baffled joy, and cried,  
“Love’s but a madness, a burnt flare ;  
The shell’s a madman’s bride.”

. . . . .

The cottage stood, poor stone and wood,  
Poorer than stone stood I ;  
Then from her kind arms moved in a mood  
As grey as the cereclothed sky.

The roosts were stirred, each little bird  
Called fearfully out for day ;  
The church clock with his dead voice whirred  
As if he bade me stay

To trace with madman’s fingers all  
The letters on the stones  
Where thick beneath the twitch roots crawl  
In dead men’s envied bones.

## *A Farm near Zillebeke*

BLACK clouds hide the moon, the amazement is gone ;  
The morning will come in weeping and rain ;  
The Line is all hushed—on a sudden anon  
The fool bullets clack and guns mouth again.  
I stood in the yard of a house that must die,  
And still the black hame was stacked by the door,  
And harness still hung there, and the dray waited by.

Black clouds hid the moon, tears blinded me more.

## *Festubert, 1916*

TIRED with dull grief, grown old before my day,  
I sit in solitude and only hear  
Long silent laughters, murmurings of dismay,  
The lost intensities of hope and fear ;  
In those old marshes yet the rifles lie,  
On the thin breastwork flutter the grey rags,  
The very books I read are there—and I  
Dead as the men I loved, wait while life drags

Its wounded length from those sad streets of war  
Into green places here, that were my own ;  
But now what once was mine is mine no more,  
I look for such friends here and I find none.

With such strong gentleness and tireless will  
Those ruined houses seared themselves in me,  
Passionate I look for their dumb story still,  
And the charred stub outspeaks the living tree.

I rise up at the singing of a bird  
And scarcely knowing slink along the lane,  
I dare not give a soul a look or word  
For all have homes and none's at home in vain :  
Deep red the rose burned in the grim redoubt,  
The self-sown wheat around was like a flood,  
In the hot path the lizard lolled time out,  
The saints in broken shrines were bright as blood.

Sweet Mary's shrine between the sycamores !  
There we would go, my friend of friends and I,  
And snatch long moments from the grudging wars ;  
Whose dark made light intense to see them by . . .  
Shrewd bit the morning fog, the whining shots  
Spun from the wrangling wire ; then in warm swoon  
The sun hushed all but the cool orchard plots,  
We crept in the tall grass and slept till noon.

## *The Troubled Spirit*

SAID God, Go, spirit, thou hast served me well  
In these our palaces, and choose out one star  
Of all the universe beneath us lies,  
And see what other beauty I have made.  
So spoke the Almighty, in whose eyes there burned  
A dimmer light, and whose bowed head revealed  
Some weariness : while Time smiled to himself.

Now takes the spirit thought, whether to search  
The rosy fires of suns innumerable  
That seem not to have rest even for a spirit,  
Or to some tinier satellite to fly  
And kindlier radiance beckoning.

Thus comes he  
To earth, and sees the restless water curve  
Round lands wherefrom a rumour smokes, scarce loud  
As the voices of the waters, and there seems  
In these lands but a quiet interchange  
Of music, jarred, yet nigh to full concent.  
So comes the spirit.

And now, passing among  
The moving multitudes, he sees how most  
Are strong and lusty in their generation,  
And though their countenance to their fellows yield  
Small comfort, yet the most seem in themselves  
To find all that this world might ever give.

The ringing cities shine in the morning light  
And in the evening glitter unafraid,  
The beasts are droved to furnish their proud tables.  
The deeps yield up their mystery for their need.

Over the green fields, over the silver waters  
Goes the good spirit, and earth's willing plenty  
Warms him to rapture, while the zeal and power  
Of busy man, thinks he, is the bright flower  
Of all besides : nay even the songs of heaven  
Scarce seem so brave, and though death takes his toll,  
The strong still flourish, and the grief's soon past.

But now the poursuivant, making swift way,  
Happy as swallows in the blue calm air,  
While the rich harvest glows and the hives rejoice,  
Espies a wilderness where little's green,  
And the land clawed as by great dragon's pounces  
Yet dumb, dun, mournful lieth by itself,  
With wounds ten thousand times ten thousand writhed.

Over this golgotha poising like a kestrel  
He stares, he wonders—here the very quiet  
Is a vast hubbub, here the sun's uprising  
Is the annihilation of night's mercy,  
The fallen jaw grins, the eyes are glazed with foulness.  
O Spirit, fly thy swiftest !



Pondering deep  
He leaves the brown waste far away, he comes  
To a white village peeping through its elms.  
There he stoops down and in a coppice rests.

The twilight now bids timid hares come forth  
And play like children in the woodside corn,  
And youth flings by, and age as bold though slow.  
But one there trembling comes where rests the spirit,  
And stands half silent, as for very shame  
To himself muttering. Yet the spirit looks  
And sees his eyes as eyes set earnestly  
On some one listening and of one mind with him.

Where the soul's uttered, though the words be halt,  
They are a language understood in heaven,  
And thus the spirit, now first listening close,  
Hears not unwitting.

‘ Like a ghost am I,  
Having no part in common day or joy,  
Young, and yet older than the oldest men.  
There's none to understand though some may love.  
Nay, those might understand would shun to open  
Their heart, but bind old memories as with chains.

Has summer come ? and has she passed her noon ?  
How once I told myself of summer coming  
When I'd amaze myself with every minute  
From the first thrill of day till midnight hawks  
Laughed bedlam down the hedge—if I should live  
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To see those magic summers. And I live ;  
But now the moss upon the churchyard stone  
Has felt the radiance with a joy not mine,  
And summer seems a rumour in the past.

So high flamed life when death was gesturing by,  
So faint burns now. A day of that gone age  
Was more than all the days that now shall come.  
Then friendship was, that mightier grew than love.  
Why are you fallen, friend after friend ? for these  
Lie now lapt in their silence and the clay  
Whose stubborn hatred they so often fought,  
And these are scattered listless and estranged.  
All climbed the summits of the immense, all learned  
The secrets of the tempest and the dawn,  
In Zara desert now all bleach or crawl.

But come you, friends, let necromantic thought  
Be our reunion ; find we our old selves  
And our old haunts, half-stricken towns that dare  
Keep mirth alive, old cellars and rare sleep,  
Lines where glad poppies burn or pollards stalk,  
And terror broods not greater than we can bear,  
Sleep's double sweet, wit twice as precious there.  
And there joy triumphs, from such danger snatcht,  
And there we'll sit and make our sad selves merry,  
Nor reckon up to-morrow and its fate ;  
Enjoy the franchise of wild-running nature,  
Nor prophesy to-morrow's maniac battle.  
*Fine merry franions——'*

Tears no words can tell  
Fall now ; the spirit goes abroad attuned  
To this wild mood, and hears it from all sides,  
And musing with a dimness on his brow  
The wreck of earth, the soul's worse solitude,  
Returns to heaven, is stationed by the throne,  
And now first sees how the bowed head reveals  
Some weariness, while Time smiles to himself.

## *The Late Stand-to*

I THOUGHT of cottages nigh brooks  
Whose aspens loved to shine and swirl,  
And chubby babies' wondering looks  
Above the doorboards, and the girl  
Who blossomed like the morning sky,  
With clear light like a lily made ;  
She dipt her bucket and went by,  
Where bright the unwithering water played.

No water ever ran so blithe  
As that same mill-tail stream, I'd say,  
And life as laughing danced as lithe  
And twinkled on as many a day.  
The wonder seemed that summer waned,  
So full it filled the giant sphere,  
But skulls chill on where warm blood reigned  
And even such summers must grow sere.

I heard the bell brag on the west  
And whisper on the eastern wind,  
And hated how it found the nest  
That Time was never meant to find :  
Through many an afternoon blue-hung  
Like sultry smoke with drowsy heat  
There came the bell-cote's scheming tongue  
Till gipsy-boys that slouched down street

With roach on withy rods impaled  
Had flown, and swallows met to fly,  
And yellow light and leaves prevailed  
And trouble roved the evening sky..  
But spite of ghosts who shook their hair  
In clouds and stalked through darker plains,  
Still to the wood bridge I'd repair  
Ere autumn palsied into rains.

The fish turned over in the shoal,  
A flash of summer ! then came she,  
Who when green leaves were lapping cool  
So like a lily dazzled me ;  
Her basketful of mushrooms got,  
She passed, she called me by my name,  
And now whole myriads are forgot  
But kindly Nell will seem the same

Down to my death ! Long tarry, Sun,  
That shone upon us two that day,  
And autumn's honey breath live on  
The last sighed air that leaves me clay !—

Clay ! clay ! the packing bullets mocked  
And split the breastwork by my head,  
And into aching senses shocked  
I gave Stand-To ! the east was red.

## *War Autobiography*

### *Written in Illness*

HEAVEN is clouded, mists of rain  
Stream with idle motion by ;  
Like a tide the trees' refrain  
Wearies me where pale I lie,  
Thinking of sunny times that were  
Even in shattered Festubert ;  
Stubborn joys that blossomed on  
When the small golden god was gone

Who tiptoe on his spire surveyed  
Yser north from Ypres creeping,  
And, how many a sunset ! made  
A longed-for glory amid the weeping.  
In how many a valley of death  
Some trifling thing has given me breath,  
And when the bat-like wings brushed by  
What steady stars smiled in the sky.



War might make his worst grimace  
And still my mind in armour good  
Turned aside in every place  
And saw bright day through the black wood :  
There the lyddite vapoured foul,  
But there I got myself a rose ;  
By the shrapnelled lock I'd prowl  
To see below the proud pike doze.

Like the first light ever streamed  
New and lively past all telling,  
What I dreamed of joy I dreamed,  
The more opprest the more rebelling ;  
Trees ne'er shone so lusty green  
As those in Hamel valley, eyes  
Did never such right friendship mean  
As his who loved my enterprise.

Thus the child was born again  
In the youth, the toga's care  
Flung aside—desired, found vain,  
And sharp as ichor grew the air :  
But the hours passed and evermore  
Harsher screamed the condor war,  
The last green tree was scourged to nothing,  
The stream's decay left senses loathing.

The eyes that had been strength so long  
Gone, or blind, or lapt in clay,  
And war grown twenty times as strong  
As when I held him first at bay ;

Then down and down I sunk from joy  
To shrivelled age, though scarce a boy,  
And knew for all my fear to die  
That I with those lost friends should lie.

Now in slow imprisoned pain  
Lie I in the garret bed  
With this cramped and weighted brain  
That scarce has power to wish me fled  
To burst the vault and soar away  
Into the apocalypse of day,  
And so regain that tingling light  
That twice has passed before my sight.

## *Third Ypres*

### *A Reminiscence*

TRIUMPH ! how strange, how strong had triumph come  
On weary hate of foul and endless war,  
When from its grey gravecloths awoke anew  
The summer day. Among the tumbled wreck  
Of fascinated lines and mounds the light was peering,  
Half-smiling upon us, and our new-found pride ;—  
The terror of the waiting night outlived ;  
The time too crowded for the heart to count  
All the sharp cost in friends killed on the assault.  
No sap of all the octopus had held us,  
Here stood we trampling down the ancient tyrant.  
So shouting dug we among the monstrous pits.

Amazing quiet fell upon the waste,  
Quiet intolerable, to those who felt  
The hurrying batteries beyond the masking hills  
For their new parley setting themselves in array  
In crafty fourms unmapped.

No, these, smiled faith,  
Are dumb for the reason of their overthrow.  
They move not back, they lie among the crews  
Twisted and choked, they'll never speak again.  
Only the copse where once might stand a shrine  
Still clacked and suddenly hissed its bullets by.

The War would end, the Line was on the move,  
And at a bound the impassable was passed.  
We lay and waited with extravagant joy.

Now dulls the day and chills ; comes there no word  
From those who swept through our new lines to flood  
The lines beyond ? but little comes, and so  
Sure as a runner time himself's accosted.

And the slow moments shake their heavy heads,  
And croak, 'They're done, they'll none of them get  
through.'

They're done, they've all died on the entanglements,  
The wire stood up like an unplashed hedge, and thorned  
With giant spikes—and there they've paid the bill.

Then comes the black assurance, then the sky's  
Mute misery lapses into trickling rain,  
That wreathes and swims and soon shuts in our world.

And those distorted guns, that lay past use,  
Why—miracles not over!—all a firing,  
The rain's no cloak from their sharp eyes. And you,  
Poor signaller, you I passed by this emplacement,  
You whom I warned, poor dare-devil, waving your  
    flags,  
Among this screeching I pass you again and shudder  
At the lean green flies upon the red flesh madding.  
Runner, stand by a second. Your message.—He's gone,  
Falls on a knee, and his right hand uplifted  
Claws his last message from his ghostly enemy,  
Turns stone-like. Well I like him, that young runner,  
But there's no time for that. O now for the word  
To order us flash from these drowning roaring traps  
And even hurl upon that snarling wire ?  
Why are our guns so impotent ?

  The grey rain,  
Steady as the sand in an hourglass on this day,  
Where through the window the red lilac looks  
And all's so still, the chair's odd click is noise,—  
The rain is all heaven's answer, and with hearts  
Past reckoning we are carried into night,  
And even sleep is nodding here and there.

The second night steals through the shrouding rain,  
We in our numb thought crouching long have lost  
The mockery triumph, and in every runner  
Have urged the mind's eye see the triumph to come,  
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The sweet relief, the straggling out of hell  
Into whatever burrows may be given  
For life's recall. Then the fierce destiny speaks.  
This was the calm, we shall look back for this.  
The hour is come ; come, move to the relief !  
Dizzy we pass the mule-strewn track where once  
The ploughman whistled as he loosed his team ;  
And where he turned home—hungry on the road  
The leaning pollard marks us hungrier turning.  
We crawl to save the remnant who have torn  
Back from the tentacled wire, those whom no shell  
Has charred into black carcasses—Relief !  
They grate their teeth until we take their room,  
And through the churn of moonless night and mud  
And flaming burst and sour gas we are huddled  
Into the ditches where they bawl sense awake  
And in a frenzy that none could reason calm  
(Whimpering some, and calling on the dead)  
They turn away ; as in a dream they find  
Strength in their feet to bear back that strange  
    whim  
Their body.

At the noon of the dreadful day  
Our trench and death's is on a sudden stormed  
With huge and shattering salvoes, the clay dances  
In founts of clods around the concrete sties  
Where still the brain devises some last armour  
To live out the poor limbs.



This wrath's oncoming  
Found four of us together in a pillbox,  
Skirting the abyss of madness with light phrases,  
White and blinking, in false smiles grimacing.  
The demon grins to see the game, a moment  
Passes, and—still the drum-tap dongs my brain  
To a whirring void—through the great breach above  
me

The light comes in with icy shock and the rain  
Horridly drips. Doctor, talk, talk ! if dead  
Or stunned I know not ; the stinking powdered concrete,

The lyddite turns me sick—my hair's all full  
Of this smashed concrete. O I'll drag you, friends,  
Out of the sepulchre into the light of day :  
For this is day, the pure and sacred day.  
And while I squeak and gibber over you,  
Out of the wreck a score of field-mice nimble,  
And tame and curious look about them. (These  
Calmed me, on these depended my salvation.)

There comes my serjeant, and by all the powers  
The wire is holding to the right battalion  
And I can speak—but I myself first spoken  
Hear a known voice now measured even to madness  
Call me by name : ' for God's sake send and help us,  
Here in a gunpit, all headquarters done for,  
Forty or more, the nine-inch came right through.  
All splashed with arms and legs, and I myself  
The only one not killed, not even wounded.

You'll send—God bless you.' The more monstrous  
fate

Shadows our own, the mind droops doubly burdened,  
Nay all for miles our anguish groans and bleeds,  
A whole sweet countryside amuck with murder,  
Each moment puffed into a year with death.

Still wept the rain, roared guns,  
Still swooped into the swamps of flesh and blood  
All to the drabness of uncreation sunk,  
And all thought dwindled to a moan,—Relieve !  
But who with what command can now relieve  
The dead men from that chaos, or my soul ?

### *' The Earth hath Bubbles '*

COME they no more, those ecstasies of earth,  
To make men tales for winter's hearth ?  
Hath the stern spirit wearied of his dreams,  
Sleeps he too deep for passion's gleams ?  
Yet still the moon can move unfathomed tears,  
Even in the noonday field walk lonely fears.

The owl, the fox cry chilling in the night,  
A thousand voices turn cheeks white,  
Long sighings run abroad when winds all sleep,  
Bodies through bursting hedges leap :  
And if we chance awhile to lose our hold  
On certainty, the morning finds us bold.

Who saw the sphinx ? 'twas you ! along the street  
You heard the beat of padded feet,  
You ran with curded blood, but past it sped,  
Leapt the high wall, showed its man's head !  
Four-footed, lowering at the moon in wane—  
That now you call a sickness of your brain !

We've lain abed and felt the whole house quake  
To a blow, dogs barked not : who should break  
The gotch on its nail, the vase on the sill ? or why  
Should all tradition seem a lie ?  
Or by what frenzy of their fiend prince were  
The earth's hobgoblins banished their old sphere ?

## *Death of Childhood Beliefs*

THERE the puddled lonely lane,  
Lost among the red swamp shallows,  
Gleams through drifts of summer rain  
Down to ford the sandy shallows,  
Where the dewberry brambles crane.

And the stream in cloven clay  
Round the bridging sheep-gate stutters,  
Wind-spun leaves burn silver-grey,  
Far and wide the blue moth flutters  
Over swathes of warm new hay.

Scrambling boys with mad to-do  
Paddle in the sedges' hem,  
Ever finding joy anew ;  
Clocks toll time out—not for them,  
With what years to frolic through !

How shall I return and how  
Look once more on those old places !  
For Time's cloud is on me now  
That each day, each hour effaces  
Visions once on every bough.

Stones could talk together then,  
Jewels lay for hoes to find,  
Each oak hid King Charles agen,  
Ay, nations in his powdered rind ;  
Sorcery lived with homeless men.

Spider Dick, with cat's green eyes  
That could pierce stone walls, has flitted—  
By some hedge he shakes and cries,  
A lost man, half-starved, half-witted,  
Whom the very stoats despise.

Trees on hill-tops then were Palms,  
Closing pilgrims' harbours in ;  
David walked there singing Psalms ;  
Out of the clouds white seraphin  
Leaned to watch us fill our bin.

Where's the woodman now to tell  
Will o' the Whisp's odd fiery anger ?  
Where's the ghost to toll the bell  
Startling midnight with its clangour  
Till the wind seemed but a knell ?

Drummers jumping from the tombs  
Banged and thumped all through the town,  
Past shut shops and silent rooms  
While the flaming spires fell down ;—  
Now but dreary thunder booms.

Smuggler trapped in headlong spate,  
Smuggler's mare with choking whinney,  
Well I knew your fame, your fate ;  
By the ford and shaking spinney  
Where you perished I would wait,

Half in glory, half in fear,  
While the fierce flood, trough and crest,  
Whirled away the shepherd's gear,  
And sunset wildfire coursed the west,  
Crying Armageddon near.

## *The Canal*

WHERE so dark and still  
Slept the water, never changing,  
From the glad sport in the meadows  
Oft I turned me.



Fear would strike me chill  
On the clearest day in summer,  
Yet I loved to stand and ponder  
Hours together

By the tarred bridge rail—  
There the lockman's vine-clad window,  
Mirrored in the tomb-like water,  
Stared in silence

Till, deformed and pale  
In the sunken cavern shadows,  
One by one imagined demons  
Scowled upon me.

Barges passed me by,  
With their unknown surly masters  
And small cabins, whereon some rude  
Hand had painted

Trees and castles high.  
Cheerly stepped the towing horses,  
And the women sung their children  
Into slumber.

Barges, too, I saw  
Drowned in mud, drowned, drowned long ages,  
Their grey ribs but seen in summer,  
Their names never :

In whose silted maw  
Swarmed great eels, the priests of darkness,  
Old as they, who came at midnight  
To destroy me.

Like one blind and lame  
Who by some new sense has vision  
And strikes deadlier than the strongest  
Went this water.

Many an angler came,  
Went his ways ; and I would know them,  
Some would smile and give me greeting,  
Some kept silence—

Most, one old dragoon  
Who had never a morning hallo,  
But with stony eye strode onward  
Till the water,

On a silent noon,  
That had watched him long, commanded :  
Whom he answered, leaping headlong  
To self-murder

‘ Fear and fly the spell,’  
Thus my Spirit sang beside me ;  
Then once more I ranged the meadows,  
Yet still brooded,

When the threefold knell  
Sounded through the haze of harvest—  
Who had found the lame blind water  
Swift and seeing ?

## *The Time is Gone*

THE time is gone when we could throw  
Our angle in the sleepy stream,  
And nothing more desired to know  
Than was it roach or was it bream ?  
Sitting there in such a mute delight,  
The kingfisher would come and on the rods alight.

Or hurrying through the dewy hay  
Without a thought but to make haste  
We came to where the old ring lay  
And bats and balls seemed heaven at least.  
With our laughing and our giant strokes  
The echoes clacked among the chestnuts and the oaks.

When the spring came up we got  
And out among old Ammet Hills  
Blossoms, aye and pleasures sought  
And found ! bloom withers, pleasure chills ;  
Then geographers along wild brooks  
We named the tumbling-bays and creeks and horseshoe  
crooks.

But one day I found a man  
    Leaning on the bridge's rail ;  
Dared his face as all to scan,  
    And awestruck wondered what could ail  
An elder, blest with all the gifts of years,  
In such a happy place to shed such bitter tears.

## *April Byeway*

FRIEND whom I never saw, yet dearest friend,  
    Be with me travelling on the byeway now  
In April's month and mood : our steps shall bend  
    By the shut smithy with its penthouse brow  
    Armed round with many a felly and crackt plough :  
And we will mark in his white smock the mill  
    Standing aloof, long numbed to any wind,  
That in his crannies mourns, and craves him still ;  
    But now there is not any grain to grind,  
    And even the master lies too deep for winds to find.

Grieve not at these : for there are mills amain  
    With lusty sails that leap and drop away  
On further knolls, and lads to fetch the grain.  
    The ash-spit wickets on the green betray  
    New games begun and old ones put away.  
Let us fare on, dead friend, O deathless friend,  
    Where under his old hat as green as moss  
The hedger chops and finds new gaps to mend,  
    And on his bonfires burns the thorns and dross,  
    And hums a hymn, the best, thinks he, that ever was.

There the grey guinea-fowl stands in the way,  
The young black heifer and the raw-ribbed mare,  
And scorn to move for tumbril or for dray  
And feel themselves as good as farmers there.  
From the young corn the prick-eared leverets stare  
At strangers come to spy the land—small sirs,  
We bring less danger than the very breeze  
Who in great zig-zag blows the bee, and whirs  
In bluebell shadow down the bright green leas ;  
From whom in frolic fit the chopt straw darts and  
flees.

The cornel steeping up in white shall know  
The two friends passing by, and poplar smile  
All gold within ; the church-top fowl shall glow  
To lure us on, and we shall rest awhile  
Where the wild apple blooms above the stile ;  
The yellow frog beneath blinks up half bold,  
Then scares himself into the deeper green.  
And thus spring was for you in days of old,  
And thus will be when I too walk unseen  
By one that thinks me friend, the best that there has  
been.

All our lone journey laughs for joy, the hours  
Like honey bees go home in new-found light  
Past the cow pond amazed with twinkling flowers  
And antique chalk-pit newly delved to white,  
Or idle snow-plough nearly hid from sight.



The blackbird sings us home, on a sudden peers  
The round tower hung with ivy's blackened chains,  
Then past the little green the byeway veers,  
The mill-sweeps torn, the forge with cobwebbed  
panes  
That have so many years looked out across the plains.

But the old forge and mill are shut and done,  
The tower is crumbling down, stone by stone falls ;  
An ague doubt comes creeping in the sun,  
The sun himself shudders, the day appals,  
The concourse of a thousand tempests sprawls  
Over the blue-lipped lakes and maddening groves,  
Like agonies of gods the clouds are whirled,  
The stormwind like the demon huntsman roves—  
Still stands my friend, though all's to chaos hurled,  
The unseen friend, the one last friend in all the  
world.

## *The Child's Grave*

I CAME to the churchyard where pretty Joy lies  
On a morning in April, a rare sunny day ;  
Such bloom rose around, and so many birds' cries  
That I sang for delight as I followed the way.

I sang for delight in the ripening of spring,  
For dandelions even were suns come to earth ;  
Not a moment went by but a new lark took wing  
To wait on the season with melody's mirth.

Love-making birds were my mates all the road,  
And who would wish surer delight for the eye  
Than to see pairing goldfinches gleaming abroad  
Or yellowhammers sunning on paling and sty ?

And stocks in the almswomen's garden were blown,  
With rich Easter roses each side of the door ;  
The lazy white owls in the glade cool and lone  
Paid calls on their cousins in the elm's chambered  
core.

This peace, then, and happiness thronged me around.  
Nor could I go burdened with grief, but made merry  
Till I came to the gate of that overgrown ground  
Where scarce once a year sees the priest come to bury.

Over the mounds stood the nettles in pride,  
And, where no fine flowers, there kind weeds dared to  
wave ;  
It seemed but as yesterday she lay by my side,  
And now my dog ate of the grass on her grave.

He licked my hand wondering to see me muse so,  
And wished I would lead on the journey or home,  
As though not a moment of spring were to go  
In brooding ; but I stood, if her spirit might come

And tell me her life, since we left her that day  
In the white liliated coffin, and rained down our tears ;  
But the grave held no answer, though long I should  
stay ;

How strange that this clay should mingle with hers !

So I called my good dog, and went on my way ;  
Joy's spirit shone then in each flower I went by,  
And clear as the noon, in coppice and ley,  
Her sweet dawning smile and her violet eye !

## *The Last of Autumn*

FROM cloudy shapes of trees that cluster the hills  
The calm blue morning into brightness climbs ;  
And joy unhopèd-for holds us hushed, and grace  
Lures love again to coigns whence the long vales  
Lie beautiful ; that to my watch-tower come  
I haunt an hour, I warm to radiance too,  
By oaks that seem to kindle with the dawn.  
But near his noon the sun sheds dizzy light,  
And burning boughs burn with the dawn of death.

Shorn empty fields ! where yet the eye discerns  
A harvest home ; look how the expanses point  
To what the crowded season scorned, to stubs  
That hold afield their outlaw solitude,  
The mandrakes of the farms ; see grouping sheep  
Dapple the broad pale green, nabbing or resting.  
Haystacks and hurdles gleam for honour now  
And troughs and hovels in the lonely spaces  
Rejected once are headstones in each corner.

Now once again the heart that long had feasted  
On revel of song and wing, then long had dimmed  
Its airy pleasure, cannot let a bird  
Chance by but counts him into memory's tribe.  
For there the witty jay laughs ; here on waves  
Invisible ripples the linnet, gross rooks gabble,  
Or pheasant in his gaudy coat clangs past.  
These are the riches of our poverty,  
And all is peopled, though so few are there.  
When sometimes wells a springing music from  
The belt of pines, then the glad moment cries  
'The nightingale,' nor that same little bird,  
Who now in Abyssinia claps his wings,  
Might grieve to own the clear recalling call.

Then, senses, quicken, for it is not long—  
Though slowly flow the gentle shadows over.

Ivy with wasp and hornet buzzes still,  
Blue glittering flies are sunning on the stones,  
And the hives among the nettles' chalky flowers  
Are toiling ; welcome, wayside thistles' crown,  
And rare-grown daisy in the meadow, shine,  
Though your pale cheeks have lost their lovely red.—

But the wind that frets the old and clinging leaves  
Arises deep, the very dirge and knell  
Of this doomed dream ;  
And sets the weazel, where she hangs and dries  
To skin and bone, still with her whiskered snarl,  
A-swaying on the barren sloe-tree's thorn.

For slow and sure comes change, and in the mass  
Of time how swift ! Look down the glade and know  
The timber felled, the vast too-cumbrous branch  
Fallen, by the pillar of white that lightning left.  
The village grandsires knew another glade.  
This day so seeming-still, so patient-paced  
Will drop down precipice darkness to its grave,  
The whirlpooled past, the legion roar of night  
Rend the tired world and leave it to its winter :  
Whose turbulent angers and fierce siege shall die  
When newness comes to the birth.

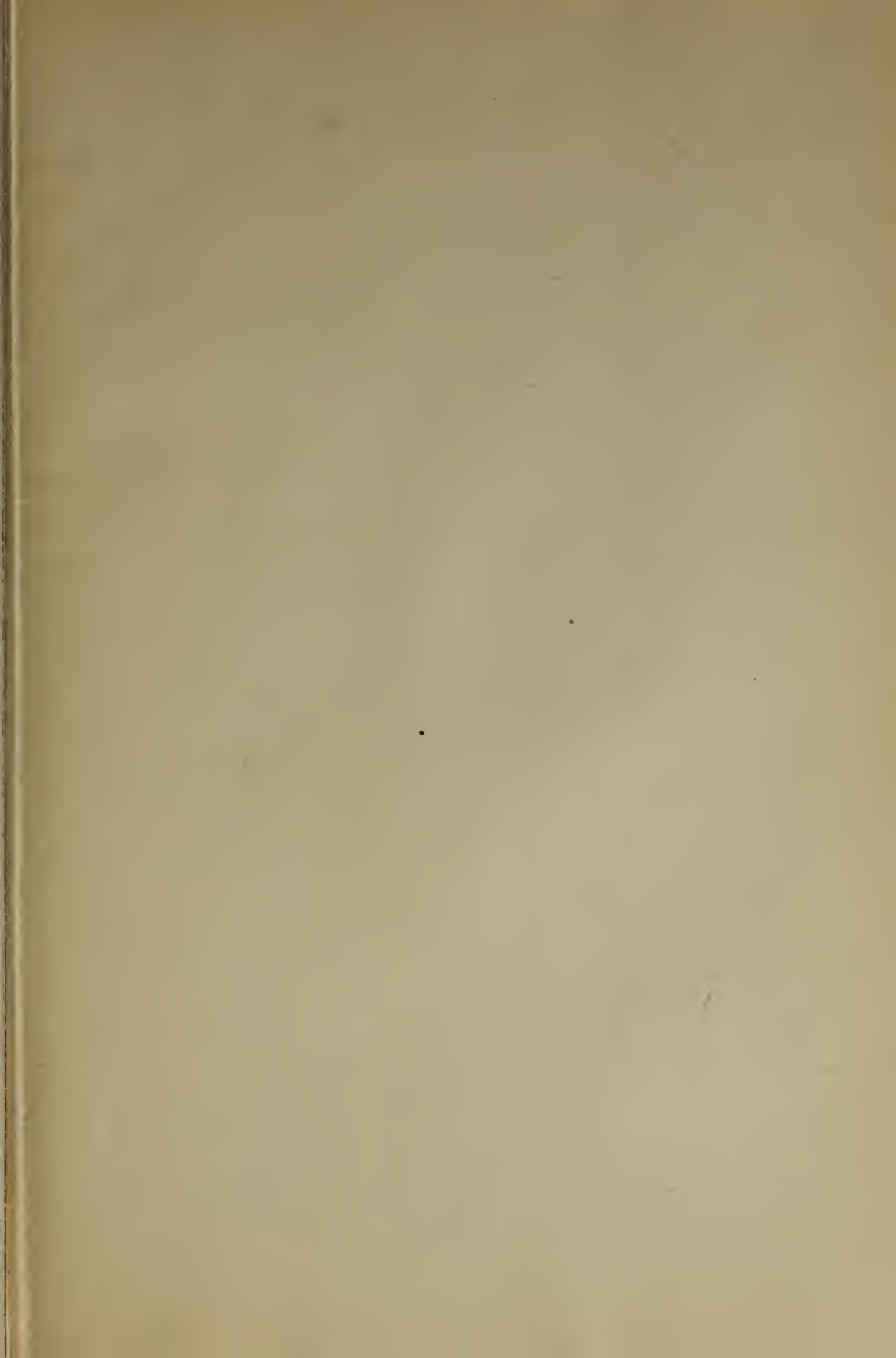
But who may tell

When spring shall be again ? and if these eyes  
Should then be shut to the brightness of her coming ?  
So for her phantom violets I'll not lose  
These rich, these poor, these fading glowing hills  
Nor drown my joy in boding. Better it were  
To be dull Thrift, than squander thus this day :  
Dull Thrift, who now has sown his mite of land,  
Has thrashed his corn and beans, and where the dew's  
Quicksilver bubbles lodge and shine all day  
In the cabbage leaves, and the last lady-bird  
Beats her bright rosy way, leans reckoning coombs  
And pence upon his garden palisades.





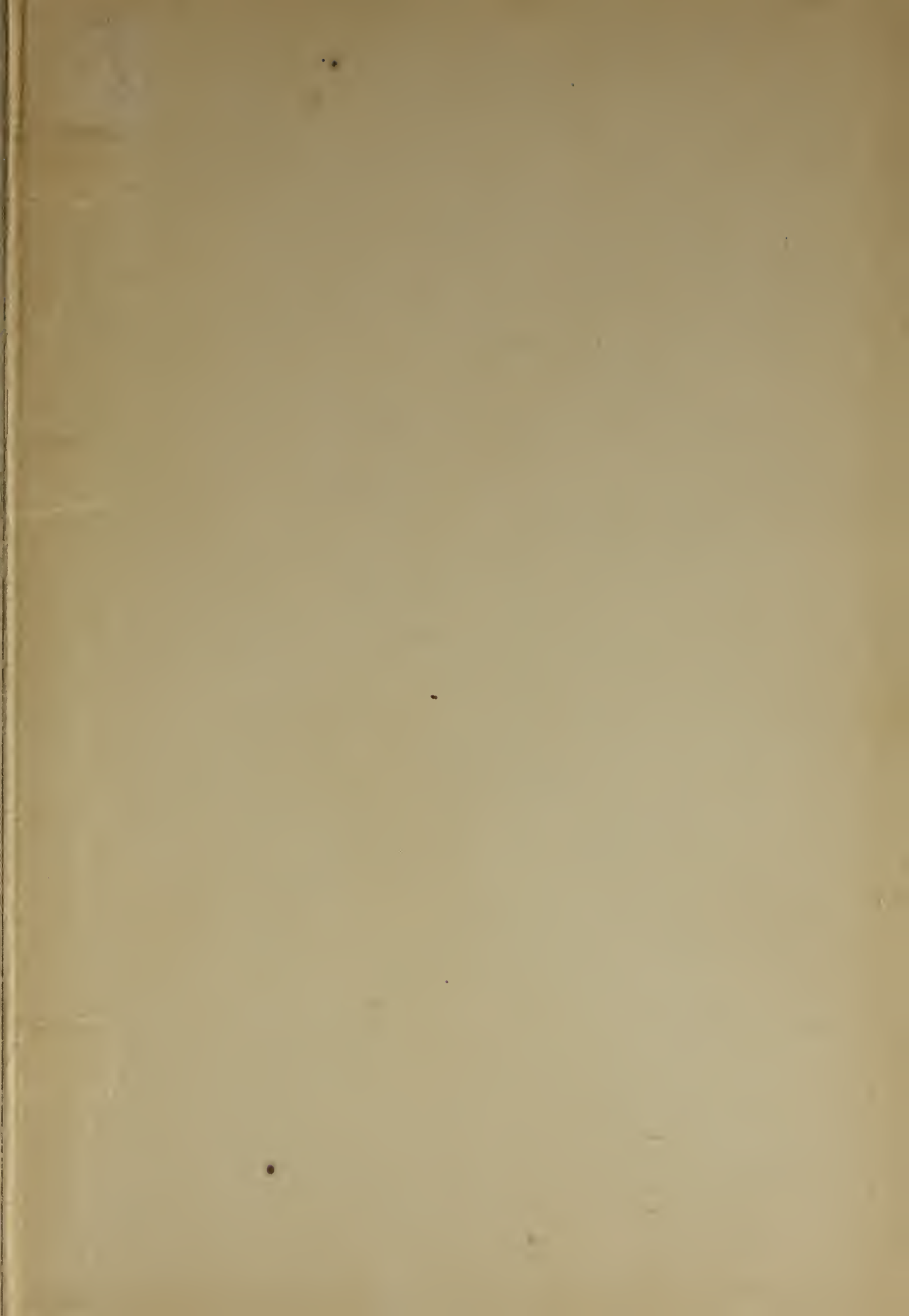
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